

Part One - Red by yuanyangty

Series: [Colors \[1\]](#)

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Gen, One Shot, One Shot Collection, Short One Shot, Stream of Consciousness

Language: English

Characters: Eleven (Stranger Things), Jim "Chief" Hopper, Mike Wheeler

Relationships: Eleven & Jim "Chief" Hopper, Eleven & Mike Wheeler, Eleven/Mike Wheeler, Jim "Chief" Hopper & Mike Wheeler

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Summary:

After Eleven's return. A series of narratives in stream-of-consciousness style. Part 1/4.

Part One - Red

What the hell.

Hopper sees the dark smokey eyes first, the ones that avoided his gaze, fixated intensely on something behind him. The lone path of red trickling from the nose. Then the hair, slicked back. The oversized jacket. The white shoes. Before he processes any of it, the skinny Wheeler kid pushes past him and he and this MTV punk are in each other's arms, crying, something something three-hundred and fifty-three. Her eyes flicker back to Hopper's and away again, concealing a tinge of dread. And before he knows it, this punk is in his own arms, his nose buried in her hair. Then he hears the Wheeler kid yelling and there come the punches. The cries of anger. Of defeat. And he, too, is wrapped in Hopper's arms.

Now he's driving to that *place*. That *hellhole*. With this punk sitting next to him. He's driving this punk to that hellhole. Where the hell did she get that outfit? Who the hell was this "nice man in the big truck" that gave her a ride? When the hell did she leave and how did he not know about it? What the hell did Hopper do to her, and to his Sara, and why the hell is he such a fucking failure and why can't he fucking protect the one person he fucking grew to care about – suddenly, tears come streaming down his face. The kid's small hand reaches for his bear paw and he truly *sees* her, perhaps for the first time in a long time. They sit and drive in silence, the world hurtling past them. Two broken souls, healing. And at that moment, he knew.

He would do anything.

That sentiment he carries with him, marching into Hawkins Lab. Wrapping up Doc's wound a bit harder than he should have. Glimpsing the reflection of those disgusting beasts scouring the chamber on his knife.

Then, red.

All he sees is red. A bright, writhing, scorching crimson, encasing everything, seemingly stretching on forever. The kid's hand reaches for his once more, and then she emits red. A fiery, fervent, brilliant,

and absolutely stunning red, more terrifying, more beautiful than anything he'd ever seen and could ever dream of seeing. And then she fucking *levitates*. Beasts, vines, every menacing silhouette against the backdrop of the sputtering scarlet gate, snarling, shooting up and down the walls, lunging toward them – they try to get to her, to stop her, but he's not about to let that happen. They fall, one at a time, continuously coming back but he's Chief fucking Jim Hopper and he's not going to let a few mangy *mutts* get the best of him, of this kid.

Then all he sees is his own red – burning in his eyes, his arms, his chest, until his entire body is ablaze with energy, flames surging through his bloodstream as he fires one shot after another after another, the red of blood splattering onto him, images flashing, blurring before him like a broken slideshow.

Pop. Just like that, his fire smothers as quickly as it had arrived. And all of a sudden, all the pressure is released and it feels as if he'd emerged from a bottomless pool, once again able to sense, to feel. And his arms, on their own, somehow tangle around the kid's exhausted, collapsed body. There, suspended hundreds of feet in midair amidst a tumultuous drizzle of beasts' corpses and that ceaseless, unworldly blizzard, he realizes just how small this kid actually is. No longer larger-than-life. All he sees is this fragile frame containing the strongest soul he knows, needing *his* help. This kid who's given him so many headaches, who's just saved the entire damn world, but who still adamantly refuses to eat peas, Eleven – no, El, *his* El – needed him right then and there. So he bundles her tiny body in his, shielding her from the world, and holds her. He just holds her.

There, as the last rays of the gate ebb away, a new red throbs to life. Not a crimson red, but one that's soft, luminous, not so dissimilar to that of the single glistening strawberry El sometimes likes to put on her Eggos, or of the first beam of sunlight gently glazing over the lapping waves of the lake he used to live by. Not that he often woke up that early. But beat by beat, that red pulsed in sync with him, with his little girl in his arms, with the gradually ascending lift.

Author's Note:

Hope you enjoyed that snippet! The next ones will be

longer.

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